

Asked if he enjoys the job, he responded: "It is not whether I am enjoying myself or not. It is about networking." His boss, the assistant to the chief information officer of FEMA, speaks to Sampson in sign language. Since his arrival, her signing has improved. "Now she has improved her sign language while I get to know her better in order to establish a connection," he said. "It is this connection that I am looking for, which may one way or the other help me in the future."

Sampson—and nine other students with disabilities—are the first to partake in these competitive information technology internships, said Mariana Nork, senior vice president at the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). The advocacy group coordinated the internships, which are funded by a two-year \$325,000 grant from Microsoft. Transportation and lodging is provided, and each intern is given a \$4,500 stipend. All of the interns are top in their respective classes, and all are seeking a career in information technology. "The disability community has continued to see a high unemployment rate in this country. Our goal is to make that change," Nork said.

"That is a multi-tiered task, but at the basis of it all is education. We must educate people with disabilities about job opportunities available to them in all of the careers. The other side of the coin is educating the potential employer." Seminars, such as one taught last week by Microsoft, teach the interns how to correctly apply for a job with a disability, said Sarah Meyer, senior manager in Microsoft's community affairs department. "To say this is successful is an understatement," Nork said of the internship program. "We are delighted, the interns are delighted and the agencies are delighted."

Sampson would be delighted to have a job. He spent five months looking for a job in Kansas, to no avail. When he heard about the AAPD internships, he applied and waited. "I post it and that was it," he wrote. "I do not like to be too anxious about anything. I just let tomorrow take care of itself."

Sampson said his ideal job is to work as a software engineer, programmer, application developer—anything that comes with some element of programming so he can help teach other deaf students. He may even start his own software engineering business "if I keep getting discriminated (against) when it comes to hiring by private companies," he wrote. Plans are already under way for him to go back to school at the University of Maryland-Adelphi to get a master's degree in computer science or software engineering. Eventually he would like a doctorate. His success has led to advice for other struggling students: "Never give up as a deaf person. Where there is a will, there is a way, and what you sow, you will reap the fruit eventually."

IN HONOR AND MEMORY OF BOB BRISON

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Mira Loma were exceptional. Mira Loma has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Bob was one of these individuals. On

August 13, 2003, Bob passed away and the community of Mira Loma had to say good-bye to a man who forever changed their way of life.

Bob was a pillar of his community, having served as the President of the Mira Loma Chamber of Commerce for 8 years. As President, he worked relentlessly to promote small business and enrich the business environment of Mira Loma. Bob was also extremely supportive of Riverside County veterans and actively participated in Jurupa VFW events such as the annual golf tournament. The owner of a concrete placement and finishing company, he donated his time and materials to paving the driveway of the VFW at Glen Avon. His compassion and ability to give saw no bounds.

Bob was also passionate about 4-H and the Future Farmers of America. He worked to ensure that the kids were successful and enjoyed their experiences while participating in the organizations. He often organized pancake breakfasts for charity and founded the Community Citizens on Patrol. The citizens' group patrols Mira Loma and supports law enforcement and code enforcement agencies in Riverside County. His commitment to various groups throughout the community immeasurably improved the quality of life of the residents of Mira Loma.

As dedicated as Bob was to the community, Bob was also a devoted husband and father. His wife Gina and two daughters, Mary and Michelle, were the joy of his life. My thoughts are with them during this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, looking back at Bob Brison's life, we see a man dedicated to his family, community, and country. Bob's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Mira Loma, California. Bob has been the heart and soul of many community organizations and events and I was proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. For all he has done and given over his lifetime, honoring his memory is our duty and privilege.

IN HONOR OF CARMEN VALENTI

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Carmen Valenti for his years of dedication and service to the citizens of New Jersey as a tireless housing advocate. He was honored on August 20, 2003 at a luncheon at Don Pepe Restaurant in Newark, New Jersey.

As the Director of the New Jersey Office of Public Housing for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the last twelve years, Mr. Valenti has worked relentlessly to implement public housing programs, and has fought for adequate and affordable housing for New Jersey residents across the state.

Mr. Valenti first came to New Jersey in 1973, where he began working with the Somerset Department of Planning. In 1978 he began working as a planner for HUD in the Newark's Community Development Office and served in that capacity for thirteen years until becoming Director in 1991.

Originally from Utica, New York, Mr. Valenti earned his bachelor's degree in History and

Sociology from Concord College in West Virginia, and his master's degree in Public Administration from Golden Gate University in San Francisco. He also holds a master's degree in Urban Planning from New York University.

From 1969 to 1973, Mr. Valenti served in the intelligence division of the United States Air Force. He earned the rank of staff Sergeant and was honorably discharged in 1973.

A true public servant, Mr. Valenti's efforts to provide better housing for New Jersey residents have improved the lives of many across the state. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Carmen Valenti for his tireless advocacy and dedication to serving the public.

TRIBUTE TO SAM T. HART

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding leader in Michigan's labor community on the occasion of his retirement after over 30 years of service. Sam Hart, Business Manager, International Union of Operating Engineers Local 324, is an operating engineer through and through. Starting as a pipe liner in Michigan, he rose through the ranks to distinguish himself within the state and the nation as a thoughtful and effective labor leader.

Mr. Hart was initiated in the International Union of Operating Engineers in 1959. He was appointed the Business Representative for Local 324 in 1971 and was first elected to the Executive Board in 1977. His leadership in organizing members in the Operating Engineers and on issues of health care and retirement security, so vital to the working men and women he represents, catapulted him to the highest tier of leadership and gained the local union a reputation throughout the state and nation.

Local 324 is considered one of the strongest local unions in Michigan, with the largest percentage of its workers organized throughout the skilled trades. Local 324 is consistently listed as one of the top 25 locals in the State.

Sam Hart's good work has called him into numerous positions of service. He was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the North and Central States Conference in 1990, the largest conference of operating engineers in the United States. He served on the negotiating Committee for the National Pipe Line Agreement for the entire U.S. and Canada. He served as President of the Michigan State Building Trades and on the Detroit AFL-CIO Executive Board. He was elected as a General Vice President to the International Union of Operating Engineers beginning in 1994 and was appointed Chairman of the General Pension in 2000.

I have been honored to know Sam Hart as a friend over so many of these years. What friends say about Sam Hart is probably most telling about the man whose career will be honored on Saturday, September 6, 2003. He is "thoughtful," "level-headed," "decent," a "gentleman" and a "family man to the core." I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the work of Sam Hart and to wish him, his wife, Darlene, and their entire family health and happiness in the years ahead.